

**White Brook Middle School**

**2021-2022**

**Student and Family Handbook**

Dear White Brook Families:

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to our school. White Brook Middle School takes great pride in our tradition of being family-oriented, child-centered schools where students learn in an atmosphere of safety and security. We invite you to join us in this wonderful adventure of learning.

This Handbook has been developed to state clearly the routines and rules of the school. We ask for your assistance, support, and partnership in promoting a safe and quality education for our students. Together we will provide a caring environment where children can succeed, reach their potential, and contribute positively to our school community.

Please review the Middle School Handbook and discuss it with your student. After your review, you must sign and return the Handbook form, indicating you have read the materials and discussed its contents with your child. The handbook form can be found on this website and was also sent home on the first day of school. If you have any questions, please call me during school hours for clarification. Your participation is very important.

We welcome you, and eagerly anticipate a wonderful year together!

Sincerely,

Meredith Balise  
Principal.

Daniel Stern  
Assistant Principal

## WHITE BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The primary focus of White Brook Middle School is to meet the educational and developmental needs of all students. The staff and administration are dedicated to providing our students with a variety of opportunities to better understand the academic, physical, emotional, and social changes encountered in grades 5-8.

**Website Information:** <http://www.epsd.us/whitebrook>

Our schools' home page is a convenient way to contact faculty and staff, and to access links to teachers' web pages, a calendar of events, breakfast and lunch menus, and other important information.

## WHITE BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNCIL

White Brook Middle School has a School Council whose membership comprises teachers, administrators, parents, students and community representatives. The school actively seeks participation. As the new school year approaches, parents and other representatives are asked to write a letter stating their interest in being a part of our school council.

## WHITE BROOK STAFF LIST 2021-2022

POSITION	NAME
<b>Principal</b>	Meredith Balise mbalise@epsd.us
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<b>Paraprofessionals</b>	Amy Cheverette Kathy Meunier Vaniael Tate Wendy Karnolisz Linda King Gail Nartowicz Jeff Cross Samantha Corbeil Christy DeLuca Linda Bailey
<b>Custodians</b>	Corey Holmes Karl Kleberg Bob Evans

## STUDENT LIFE

### Extracurricular Activities

The following school activities are available to all students:

Beginner Band, Jazz Band, Concert Band	School Council
Guitar Club	Peer Leaders (grades 7 and 8)
	Game Club
Art Club	
STRAT (Students and Teachers Raising Awareness Together)	

### Academic Honesty

The school expects all students to be academically honest. Students have the responsibility to acknowledge the work of others, only taking credit for work that is solely their own.

Cheating on tests, copying assignments, or sharing work in any way not directly assigned by teachers are forms of academic dishonesty. Giving or receiving help on tests or projects unless specifically permitted by the teacher are also forms of cheating.

To use the ideas or words of others without giving them credit is plagiarism. Cheating and plagiarism are prohibited in all areas of study, including, but not limited to, the following areas: homework, tests, quizzes, lab reports, research papers, and projects.

This policy applies to any student who cheats or plagiarizes and/or any student who willingly assists another student in cheating or plagiarizing. In the event that a student cheats or plagiarizes, the process will be as follows:

- The student receives no credit for the assignment.
- The teacher will notify the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the incident.
- The teacher will notify the administration, which may take further disciplinary action, including a conference with the parent(s)/legal guardian(s), student, and guidance counselor as well as detention, or suspension if deemed necessary.

### Controversial Issues in the Classroom

An important goal of public education is to help students develop the capacity to participate in the discussion and analysis of controversial issues using respect, critical thinking and positive engagement.

Discussion and analysis of controversial issues has a legitimate place in our schools and should enable all participants to learn from one another. All staff and students have a right to express their opinions and a right to a respectful hearing. All opinions are to be equally open to support, question, or challenge. Staff must be sensitive to the differing views of their students and take care that their own personal opinions have no privileged status. Whenever outside persons are invited to speak on controversial issues, care will be taken to assure that a reasonable range of opinions on the issue at hand are presented in an equitable manner.

1. If an issue is important to the subject under discussion and if the issue relates to the goals and objectives of instruction as determined by the teacher, that issue may be introduced. All views pertinent to the goals and objectives of instruction may be heard.
2. The classroom teacher should avoid discussions of controversial issues that are not relevant to the subject under study. Such discussion should be reserved for private conversation so that class time is focused on prepared units or course objectives.
3. Learning materials which best provide the pertinent information may be used by the teacher. It is not possible or required that objectivity be located in each book or other unit of information. Objectivity resides in the aggregate of readings, presentations, and classroom discussions that comprise the learning unit.

4. In the discussion of a controversial issue, the quality of evidence and its presentation are subject to evaluation so that opinion is viewed as requiring sound reasoning. Interpretation, belief, or theory are to be evaluated on the grounds of evidence and reasoning and not on the conclusions solely.

## ACADEMIC INFORMATION/HOMEWORK

Homework is a major component and vital part of the middle school program. It is an extension of the regular daily school program and, as such, should have the same thoughtful, creative consideration and planning given to other aspects of the program. The goal is to help students develop good homework/study habits through regular homework assignments.

A student is expected to give his/her best effort every day in school. Being a successful learner involves self-discipline and organization. Good study habits are extremely important, so important in fact, that the teachers will be teaching study skills. Every student will be provided with a student organizer book and a list of necessary educational supplies. Please feel free to use the student planner as a method of parent or legal guardian/teacher communication.

### Honor Roll

Each term 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have excelled with above average-grades are recognized on the White Brook Middle School Honor Roll.

- **FIRST HONORS:** All effort and conduct ratings are good or excellent. Grades in all subjects are “90” or higher.
- **SECOND HONORS:** All effort and conduct ratings are good or excellent. Grades in all subjects are “80” or higher.

### Incomplete/Make-up Work

In case of illness or other excused absences, students may be given a grade of “**incomplete.**” All incomplete grades and make-up work will be remediated on an individual basis.

### Promotion and Retention Policy

It is the policy of the Easthampton School Committee to encourage and assist each student in achieving academic success. The School Department recognizes individual differences in all children, and the importance of considering a wide array of information regarding academic progress when recommending student retention. The principal shall direct a process used in evaluating the student’s academic, social, and emotional needs.

Students will progress annually from grade to grade. A student who fails two or more academic courses may be considered for retention. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best interest of the students involved.

Grade retentions/advancements will be made after prior consultation with each student’s parents.

Should the child’s parent or guardian wish to appeal the retention decision, the principal will aid them in contacting the superintendent or designee to initiate appeal.

In evaluating student achievement, teachers will make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized-test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The principal shall direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards. The guiding philosophy for determining promotion or retention will be what is in the best interest of the student.

### Report Cards and Progress Reports

White Brook Middle School students are responsible for bringing home and sharing with their parents all reports and correspondence from the school.

Report cards listing students’ achievements in each subject area are issued three times a year. Progress reports are issued midway through each marking period, and will indicate a grade at that point in time.

Computers are used to print report cards. The report card verification form must be signed by parent/guardian and returned. Dates when report cards are issued will be published so that parents/guardians will know when they should be receiving this document.

## GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

At White Brook Middle School we strive to maintain a school culture that balances a rigorous and engaging learning community with a child-centered environment that honors the individual talents and struggles of every child. We acknowledge that, in the middle school years, our students face some of the most dramatic physical, social and emotional growth of their lives. Thus, it is our responsibility, in partnership with parents, to teach critical skills and provide the adult guidance that will help students grow to lead confident, responsible and productive lives.

### What is teaming?

Teaming is the organizational structure used at White Brook Middle School. The teachers on a team share the responsibility for planning classroom programs, interdisciplinary units, and field trips. The team meets regularly to discuss their students and foster a strong learning community.

### Turning Points 2000

White Brook Middle School has embraced the philosophy of *Turning Points 2000* (a middle school reform initiative backed by the Carnegie Corporation's Middle Grade School State Policy Initiative). "Schools grounded in the *Turning Points* design are dedicated to excellence and equity and to being responsive to the developmental needs of all young adolescents." The following seven principles are the core of our program:

- Teach a curriculum grounded in rigorous, public academic standards for what students should know and be able to do, relevant to the concerns of adolescents and based on how students learn best.
- Use instructional methods designed to prepare all students to achieve higher standards and become lifelong learners.
- Staff middle grade schools with teachers who are experts at teaching young adolescents, and engage teachers in ongoing, targeted professional development opportunities.
- Organize relationships for learning to create a climate of intellectual development and a caring community of shared educational purpose.
- Govern democratically, through direct or representative participation by all school staff members, the adults who know the students best.
- Provide a safe and healthy school environment as part of improving academic performance and developing caring and ethical citizens.
- Involve parents and communities in supporting student learning and healthy development.

*(Turning Points 2000: Educating Adolescents in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Jackson and Davis)*

### The Virtues Project

White Brook Middle School adopted The *Virtues Project* an award winning, non-sectarian program that teaches simple elements of character honored by all cultures. The *Virtues Project International Association* is a global grassroots initiative to inspire the practice of virtues in everyday life, sparking a global revolution of kindness, justice, and integrity in more than 100 countries.

The *Virtues Project* fosters academic excellence while creating a culture of social responsibility, integrity and leadership. It nurtures children in the skills and qualities they need to be successful in school and in life. Although they are the oldest practices in the world, virtues are essential to the true goal of education – intelligence plus character.

The *Virtues Project* is not a curriculum but rather a simple process and a language intended to bring out the best in our students and is most effective when used during teachable moments within lessons, during morning meeting circle (CPR), and any interaction with students that calls on a need to draw out the best that they can be.

The *Virtues Project* teaches students about virtues that are held in high regard within most cultures. Students will be able to identify virtues in themselves and others. Teachers, school staff, and parents become mentors helping our children to become compassionate, courageous, respectful, confident and purposeful.

A core component of this program is to engage families and community members as partners in the character-building effort. Participation is fundamental to the success of the *Virtues Project* at our school. Our goal is to generate a positive outlook on the students, parents, teachers and staff who make up our school community and create momentum towards a unified effort to enrich the learning environment of White Brook Middle School!

- All food and/or drink must be consumed in the cafeteria.
- Students are not allowed to leave the cafeteria area without permission from the lunch monitor.
- Students are expected to clean up their own lunch materials.
- Students are expected to be courteous and respectful to both lunch monitors and cafeteria staff.
- If a student forgets lunch money, he/she will be given a sandwich and a container of milk. The student will not be allowed to purchase snacks. The lunch provided does not need to be paid back. If the situation becomes chronic it will be brought to the attention of the student's parent or guardian.
- A special table is provided at every lunch for students with food allergies.

### Dismissal

Students who are to be dismissed during the school day must have written permission from a parent/guardian. This permission will include the date, time and the reason for the dismissal. Students are to get an early dismissal slip as soon as they enter the building in the morning. The student will come to the main office, sign out and wait for parent /guardian to come into the office for pick up. The parent/guardian will introduce himself or herself to the school secretary before leaving with the student. Children will only be released to a parent/guardian unless the parent/guardian provides written authorization to release the child to some other person.

Regular daily dismissal will begin at 2:35 p.m. Students should proceed directly to lockers and on to their bus lines. All walkers must leave school grounds immediately upon dismissal.

Students who remain in the building after the 2:35 p.m. dismissal must have specific permission and be directly supervised by a staff member.

### Entering School

Students who walk to school are to come directly to school. They are not to trespass on private property or loiter on streets and adjacent areas. Students who wait at bus stops should be respectful of private property, be considerate regarding noise, and follow instructions regarding bus stops. Students will not be supervised before school until 7:55 a.m. Students enter the building at 8:05 a.m. and report to homerooms by 8:15 a.m. ready for morning announcements. School breakfast is offered in the east cafeteria at 8:00 a.m. each morning.

### Hall Passes

As a general rule, students will remain in all classes for the entire class period. When there is an important need to leave the classroom, a hall pass must be obtained from the teacher and students will sign in and out of the room. Students who have a medical need to leave the room at frequent intervals should bring a note of explanation from a physician. A special form will be issued by the school nurse for students to show teachers when they need to leave a classroom.

Hall passes must be carried by the student and presented to staff members when requested. When a student returns to the classroom, the hall pass must be returned to the classroom teacher.

### Library/Media Center

Students may use the Library/Media Center individually or as part of a small group for study purposes. Books, except reference and reserve books, may be checked out by students for a two-week period. Students will be liable for late, lost, and/or damaged books. A fine of 10 cents a day per school day will be charged for overdue materials up to the cost of replacement. Parents will be billed the replacement cost for any books not returned or renewed in 30 days.

## Lost and Found

When you find an article, take it to the main office. If you lose something, inquire at the office either before or after school. Each year many items of clothing are turned in at the office, unidentified and never claimed. The school is not responsible for lost articles, but will cooperate in trying to find what is lost. Students are advised not to bring valuables or large sums of money to school. Lost and found articles can be retrieved from the South Cafeteria. There is a bar set up so clothes can be hung up; and there is a shelf for other articles that are lost.

## REGULATIONS FOR ALL AFTER SCHOOL, EVENING, AND WEEKEND ACTIVITIES

All school policies will be in effect. Students must not loiter outside during the activity. If they do not choose to attend the activity, they must leave school property. Noisy and disorderly conduct will not be tolerated. Students found in unauthorized sections of the building will be asked to leave and can expect further disciplinary action.

For Fun Fridays/Dances, students must complete a permission form in September to attend any dance during the academic year. Student must leave backpacks and/or large purses with the chaperones at the door. Anyone leaving the building before the dance is over will not be readmitted and will need to sign out with the chaperones at the door. Chaperones will call the parents/guardians and inform them the student has left the dance early. The school cannot be held responsible for any lost or stolen articles.

Students who are absent, internally or externally suspended from school requirements will be prohibited from attending dances and other after- school activities.

## CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

### Student Rights and Responsibilities

Students have the right to pursue an education and the right to due process.

Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, promptness to school and class, a conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school and classroom rules. Students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to learning.

**No student has the right to interfere with the education of other students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of all whom are involved in the educational process.**

### Statement on Civility

Our school is a place where students live, work, and grow together. Nothing is more important for students and families than a safe, orderly, and supportive school environment. In order to maintain such an environment, students are expected and required to treat one another in a respectful, civil manner. Students are expected to respect the spirit, differences, and feelings of schoolmates, and to refrain from the use of insults and name-calling. Further, disorderly conduct or violence committed for reasons based on race ethnicity, or sexual preference will not be tolerated.

Students who believe their civil rights have been violated in any of these ways should report their concerns to an administrator who will investigate the complaint. If it is determined that civil rights have been violated, disciplinary action will occur.

Students are expected to:

- Accept responsibility for their own actions.
- Express appropriately their own ideas and feelings without infringing on the rights of others.
- Recognize the effect of their behavior on others.
- Demonstrate perseverance in working to accomplish goals.
- Recognize and respect individual differences.
- Demonstrate physical self-control (i.e. physical activity appropriate to time, place, and setting).
- Respect materials, possessions, and facilities.

## Homeroom Attendance

All students are assigned to homeroom for attendance and information distribution purposes. Students must be in homeroom by 8:15 a.m. each morning. During the homeroom period, any necessary announcements will be made, and notices for students will be distributed.

## Tardy to School

Students must be in homerooms by 8:15 a.m. If a student arrives at school late, he or she must report directly to the main office.

Tardy Detentions: four tardies in a one-month period of time will result in a lunch detention. Additional tardies in the same month will result in additional lunch detentions and guidance referral.

## RULES REGARDING GENERAL CONDUCT IN SCHOOL

### Cooperation

1. A student may not disrupt the instructional program of any class.
2. A student may not use abusive, obscene, or otherwise offensive language.
3. Students are expected to follow the rules of procedure specific to each class or other school situation.
4. At times, in order to manage a crisis or difficult situation, students are expected to respond immediately to directives from adults. Students who fail to respond appropriately in this sort of situation will be subject to disciplinary actions.

### Conduct Toward Others

1. Running, playing, or loitering in areas so as to impede passage, cause disruption, or endanger others is not allowed.
2. The guiding principle for conduct between students is to maintain respect for others. The following behaviors are not allowed:
3. Abusive name calling, teasing or taunting
4. The use of racial or ethnic epithets (names)
5. Cursing or shouting obscenities
6. Intimidation of others, including phone and/or "cyber" bullying
7. Fighting
8. Pushing, striking, kicking, or other hurtful physical behavior
9. Taking something belonging to another without permission; attempting to force such permission

## OTHER SCHOOL RULES AND PROCEDURES

### Student Visitors

1. No student visitors are allowed without prior permission of an administrator.
2. The host student must gain permission for the visit from each teacher and an administrator at least one full day in advance. On the day of the visit, the host student and guest will report to the school office and receive a visitor's pass. The visiting student will follow the class schedule of the host student.
3. No local students will be allowed to visit the White Brook Middle School when school is in session.

## Dress Code

Public Schools are delegated with the responsibility of educating students and maintaining an effective and orderly learning environment. The following guidelines promote school safety and enhance the learning environment at White Brook Middle School.

Personal dress and appearance that violates reasonable standards of health, safety, cleanliness, and or propriety; or disrupts or substantially interferes with the educational process or with another student's ability to receive an education is prohibited.

- Students shall not wear anything that depicts drugs, violence, obscene words or pictures, profanity, sexually suggestive words or images, or that promotes violence or illegal activities for students which may include alcohol, guns, knives, and other.
- Undergarments should not be exposed.
- Attire covering the top of the body must extend over the shoulders and be long enough to cover the navel and the torso.
- Students must wear clothing or jewelry which is safe in school, such as no sharp or pointed studs, no sunglasses, and appropriate footwear that is secure on the foot.
- Hats with brims.
- Pajamas and/or flannel pajama bottoms.
- Gang apparel or symbolism is not permitted.
- Hate speech on clothing is barred.
- Student's personal dress and appearance must comply with all OSHA and safety regulations.

School administrators will make final decisions about the implementation of the dress code. Students not adhering to these guidelines will be asked to change into other clothes or have a change of clothes brought in for them. If the student refuses to comply, disciplinary action may be taken.

## Locker Regulations

Students will have a locker assigned to them by their homeroom teacher. **STUDENTS MUST ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POSSESSIONS WHICH THEY KEEP IN THEIR LOCKERS.** Lockers are school property made available to students for the limited purpose of storing items on school premises and are subject to administrative search at any time for any reason. Lockers must be kept clean and orderly at all times. For your own protection, do not disclose your combination to anyone.

### Bicycles, Skateboards, Roller Blades, and Motorized Vehicles

1. Bicycles are to be parked and locked at the bicycle rack in the parking lot.
2. Students are not to ride bicycles in the parking lots or in front of the building. When you get to the parking lots, you must dismount and walk your bicycle.
3. Students riding on school property must wear approved safety helmets.
4. Skateboards and roller blades are not allowed on school property.
5. Motorized scooters/bikes or other motorized vehicles are not allowed on school property.

### Electronic Devices

Electronic devices, including cell phones cannot be used in school or on busses without administrative permission. Such items will be confiscated by staff members and turned in to the office. If students are given permission by a staff member to bring an electronic device to school such as a camera, electronic book reader, etc., the student is responsible for it. The school is not responsible for lost or broken items.

On the second offense for bringing the above items to school, the item will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school year.

### Cell Phones

Cell phones must be turned off and in lockers during school hours. Students should not have their cell phones on their person at any time in the building. If a cell phone is activated (incoming call/text or in use by internet, etc.) then the phone will be collected, and sent to the office, and the student may receive a consequence. If there is a second offense, then the parent/guardian may need to pick up the student's cell phone from the office and the student may have consequences. Any future cell phone violations will result in parent/guardian and administration conference with further consequences. Cell phones will not be returned until the conference is held. The school is not responsible for a lost or broken cell phone if a student chooses to bring it to school.

## DISCIPLINE

### Goals/Philosophy of the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy

One of the goals of White Brook Middle School is to help students develop personal responsibility. We want students to recognize that they are in control of and accountable for their actions in a community which balances structure and support. White Brook Middle School's detailed disciplinary system is an attempt to clarify our expectations of students' behavior and to clearly articulate the consequences of poor decisions. For this reason, it is crucial that students and parents/guardians spend some time together to discuss what WBMS expects of its students and how the school will respond in a disciplinary situation. It is our belief that students operate effectively in a community in which expectations and consequences are clear, consistent and just. To this end, the school will try to respond to every disciplinary situation consistently. Every student will be treated equally. The following rules attempt to make clear the way in which students can expect the school to react to specific guidelines. However, this serves only as a guideline. Circumstances can require action, for the sake of the community, that is more appropriate.

### Procedures in the Classroom

Teachers are responsible for establishing standards of conduct within the classroom. They should use common sense to diffuse or stop situations that interfere with the educational process. They should recognize the individual differences of students. Teachers are strongly encouraged to refer students to guidance counselors when inappropriate, as there may be underlying causes for a student's disruptive behavior.

In their attempts to effect student behavior, teachers are encouraged to utilize all school resources including school counselors, nurses, the Building Support Team, other teachers and administrators. Teachers should utilize these resources before situations need the attention of the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Teachers are encouraged to contact parents/legal guardians when appropriate to enhance communication between home and school.

Some areas of discipline should remain in the classroom and be handled by the classroom teacher. These include, but are not limited to:

- Tardiness to class
- Being unprepared for class
- Talking and other minor disruptions
- Minor horseplay
- Food in the classroom
- Non-participation in classroom activities/assignments

A student should be sent to the administration for repeated offenses or serious disruptions as outlined in Section I, II and III of this policy.

### Teacher Detention

Detention is defined as the time a student is assigned to stay after school for infractions of unacceptable student behavior. When assigned a detention, students will serve the next day. All detentions must be served within 24 hours of being assigned. This notice may only be waived by mutual consent of both teacher and parent.

Each teacher is responsible for the students he/she detains after school. A student may be detained according to the discipline code.

The student is charged with the responsibility of notifying his/her parent(s)/guardian. Teacher detention length is at the discretion of the teacher and should not last beyond 3:30 PM. **Un-served teacher detentions will result in a sixty (60) minute office detention or two lunch detentions.**

### Office/Lunch Detentions

Office/lunch detentions must be served as assigned by the Principal or Assistant Principal after school or during lunch in the office. Office detention times will be set at 60 minutes. Lunch detention times are to be served during the student's assigned lunch period. A student serving lunch detention goes directly to the room of the assigning teacher or to the focus room after getting their lunch.

Office/Lunch detentions are assigned to a student by the administration. The infractions below may result in a minimum of one (1) sixty-minute office detention or two (2) lunch detention:

- Unexcused tardiness to class/school
- Insolence
- Defiance
- Disruptive, rude or discourteous behavior
- Disorderly behavior in school, on school grounds, or at school events
- Failure to follow directions
- Disrespect
- Unexcused absence from lunch
- Misuse/falsifying school passes or tardy slips
- Failure to identify oneself properly to one in authority
- Unexcused absence from class
- Failure to serve a teacher detention

Club meetings, artistic or instrumental rehearsals, or any other after school commitments do not exempt students from completing their assigned detentions.

### Behavior While in the Office

Students who are sent to the office to see an administrator for disciplinary reasons are expected to follow the directions listed below:

- a. Report directly to the office.
- b. Check in at the office counter.
- c. Take a seat and remain silent.
- d. Follow directions given by office staff